

WOOD, HAY, or STUBBLE?

By

Rabbi Edward L. Nydle

"So the people scattered throughout all the land of Mitzriam (Egypt), in order to gather STUBBLE to use for straw!" Shemot 5:12

"If any man builds on this Foundation - Yesod (Yahshua) using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw (stubble), His work (ma'aseh) will be shown for what it is; because the day (Yom Hadin) will bring it to light. It will be revealed by fire, and the fire (eish) will test the quality of everyman's work. If it survives, he will receive his reward. And if anyone's work is burned up, he will sustain a loss though he will be saved; as it were-saved as through the fire!" 1 Corinthians 3:12-15

The children of Israel were in bondage to Pharaoh in Egypt, under hard taskmasters, and their lives were bitter by the heavy burdens laid upon them. Their days and nights were spent laboring to build the cities of Pharaoh out of the brick that they were forced to make from the slime and straw. Magnificent edifices were built to honor Pharaoh and the false gods of Egypt, all built by the children of Israel. Then YHWH heard their cries for a Deliverer and sent Moshe as a type of Messiah to free the Children of Israel from their bondage.

But, because of Moshe and his message to Pharaoh, the labor to make the brick became even bitterer as they were forced to gather mere stubble to make their daily quota of brick. This caused the children of Israel to turn on Moshe and Aharon and blame them for their bitter lives of slavery being increased.

This is a prophetic picture of Israel in these last days. We were in the world (Egypt), driven by hard taskmasters (the flesh) that were overseen by Pharaoh making brick to build buildings and monuments to man-made religious systems. Using slime (earthly, not heavenly material) and straw or STUBBLE (things worthless and of NO value or too insubstantial to provide support) to build these foundations and buildings. YHWH sends Yahshua our Deliverer to us with the message of the Torah of Liberty and we murmur and complain because it seems to increase our burdens rather than lift them off, because our ego increases the pressure for us to labor harder building bricks. We fail to see spiritually that our Deliverer has come to free us from this bondage we find ourselves in because of these man-made systems of religion. The Torah of Moshe will set us free from sin if we only see that it was given by YHWH to set us free from sin, if we live it through the power Yahshua provides through the Ruach.

It is the Torah of the flesh (the taskmaster) that puts us in bondage to Pharaoh. We are the servant of whom we serve. Only Yahshua can set us free if we heed His message and follow Him as we accept our deliverance from Egypt. He has been sent by YHWH, just as Moshe was, to tell Pharaoh to "Let MY people (Israel) GO!" He is the Passover Lamb YHWH gave to set us free. He is YHWH's sacrifice! Torah only seems to increase the burden on the lives of those without eyes to see and who are satisfied making brick for Pharaoh. Also, they set back and actually admire the edifices THEY HAVE BUILT FOR PHARAOH! It is because Pharaoh meets their needs since they are his slaves.

Now, let us look at the second set of verses in *1 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 11-13* and see how they relate to this time of the children of Israel in Egypt. First, we are told there is ONE true Foundation-Yahshua the Messiah of Israel. According to the prophet Yeshayahu (Isaiah) He is the foundation stone and representative of Israel-YHWH's Firstborn and Servant. Then we are told that if any man build on this foundation- Yahshua (the Living Torah) and His teachings (see *Matt.7: 24*) with gold (speaking of His Divinity and your faith *1 Kepha 1:7*), silver (representative of redemption), and precious stones (the teachings of the talmidim of Yahshua—see *Rev. 21:19-20* and the knowledge of the Restored Kingdom of Israel represented by the twelve stones on the breastplate—one for each tribe) which are all non-combustible items when put into the fire (testing and trials) of judgment . We read in *Malaki (Malachi) 3:3* that YHWH shall purge and refine the sons of Lewi (Levi) so they may offer to YHWH in righteousness.

The next three items –wood (representing the man-made works), hay, and straw (representing the works and doctrines that are unstable and unable to support ones weight or you cannot lean upon without them breaking) are all combustibile and very easily burnt and consumed by the fire of judgment. We also read in *Devarim 4:24* that YHWH is a consuming fire in his jealousy over you. So, these are works in our lives that YHWH is not pleased with EVEN IF THEY ARE RELIGIOUS WORKS because they had THEIR foundations built on these unstable materials of man-made doctrines!

In verse 14 we are told that if any man's WORKS abide or endures the fire of YHWH's judgment that he shall receive a reward or actually –his salary or wages for these works built of these precious metals. But we are told if his works burn up in the fire of YHWH's judgment because they are based upon man-made perishable doctrines, he shall suffer loss, yet he shall be delivered or "saved" through the fire or judgment. These verses are dealing with the true Believers in Yahshua and their works and service to Him through the performance of works based upon His Word (Torah), not their relationship to Him through true belief. Their rewards in the Millennial Kingdom of YHWH will either suffer loss or remain based upon what they are materials he used to build them upon.

If we continue on in the chapter, we find that YHWH will actually DESTROY ANYONE who defiles or destroys the House of YHWH. Is this verse talking of the congregation as a whole being the House or the individual? I think it is the individual as Shaul is speaking of the individual's judgment before YHWH. We must all stand before Him as an individual.

Now, let us weave these two different thoughts – the one from *Shemot* and the one from *Corinthians* together. YHWH has provided us with building materials to build our spiritual house upon so that it may stand in the Day of Judgment and endure the fire. He has sent His messenger-Yahshua and his servants to tell us the good-news of our redemption and that we are free from the bondage of sin. We can accept that and Passover the Red Sea and leave Egypt and Pharaoh and his taskmasters. Or we can use the materials of man that only make our labors for Pharaoh harder, and continue to build with bricks the man-made edifices for Pharaoh, all the while blaming and speaking evil of the very ones YHWH has sent to tell us we are FREE of all this man-made bondage.

How about you? Are you tired of your taskmaster making you use brick to build the cities of Pharaoh? Will you accept the message of Yahshua –your Rescuer and be sent FREE from all the bondage of Egypt? Are you ready to begin to build YHWH's House using His materials that will endure the fire of His judgment? He has provided the Passover Sacrifice in Yahshua and provided the material in the Torah for you to begin. It is your choice.-Bondage or freedom. Will your labor for Messiah endure? What materials are YOU building with?